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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 5400th meeting of the Security Council, held on 29 March 2006, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in Côte d'Ivoire", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council expresses its full support for the International Working Group and endorses its fifth final communiqué of 17 March 2006. It commends Prime Minister Charles Konan Banny for his initiatives, taken in cooperation with President Laurent Gbagbo, which gave a new momentum to the peace process, and reiterates its full support for him. It also welcomes the efforts of Mr. Antonio Monteiro and encourages the Secretary-General to appoint a new High Representative for the elections as soon as possible.

"The Security Council welcomes the progress achieved in recent weeks, in particular the meeting of the entire Cabinet, the establishment of the Independent Electoral Commission, the organization of exams in the North, and the preparation of operations of identification of the populations and of disarmament.

"The Security Council urges Ivorian leaders to fulfil all their commitments, in particular those made in Yamoussoukro on 28 February 2006, and to rapidly implement the road map, in good faith and in a spirit of trust, in order to organize free, fair, open and transparent elections by 31 October 2006. It underlines the urgency of progress in the identification process, the establishment of the electoral registers and the commencement of the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration programme.

"The Security Council calls on donor countries to provide the Prime Minister with all the necessary support for the full and immediate implementation of the road map.

"The Security Council, nevertheless, reiterates its grave concern at the situation in the West. It urges the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) to continue its redeployment in this region. It calls also for the return of this region to civilian authority.

"The Security Council strongly condemns the persistence of violations of human rights, the attacks against members of the Government, the obstacles to the freedom of movement of impartial forces, and the incitements to hatred and violence in the media. In this regard, it requests the Ivorian authorities to guarantee, in close liaison with UNOCI, that all steps be taken to preserve the independence of Radio Télévision Ivoirienne."

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